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1944 - 1945



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Tuesday Evening, January 9th, 1945



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TUESDAY, JANUARY 9th, 1945

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra

SIR ERNEST MacMILLAN, Conductor
Guest Artist: KATHLEEN PARLOW, Violinist

Programme

GOD SAVE THE KING

PRELUDE AND FUGUE - - - *Mendelssohn-Benjamin*

VIOLIN CONCERTO IN B MINOR (No. 3, Op. 61) - - *Saint-Saens*

Allegro non troppo
Andantino quasi allegretto
Molto moderato e maestoso: allegro non troppo
KATHLEEN PARLOW—*Violinist*

INTERMISSION

SYMPHONY NO. 6, IN F (PASTORAL SYMPHONY) - - *Beethoven*

1. Awakening of joyful feelings on arriving in the country
2. By the brook
3. Merry Gathering of country folk (leading to)
4. Thunderstorm (leading to)
5. Shepherd's song; happy and thankful feelings after the storm

SCHERZO CAPRICCIOSO (Op. 66) - - - *Dvorak*

MASSEY HALL, TORONTO, TUESDAY, JANUARY 9th, 1945

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra Association SEASON 1944-1945

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To-night's Artist . . .



Kathleen Parlow played with the London Philharmonic at the age of fourteen and, so unstinted was the critics praise for her performance, it was decided that she should study under Prof. Leopold Auer, the master of many other great violinists, including Heifetz, Zimbalist and Elman. Following a successful Continental tour she received a Royal Command to play before the Queen of Norway and since then has played eleven times for their Majesties. Returning to America, Miss Parlow scored tremendous triumphs — critics reached out for new superlatives to describe her playing. Notable among her engagements have been sixteen appearances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Anyone reading reviews of Miss Parlow's concerts around the world can easily understand why she is known as the "World's greatest woman violinist."

The musical life of our city has been greatly enriched since Miss Parlow accepted her present position on the Faculty of the Toronto Conservatory of Music. Not only has she helped violinists in the city, but she has also endowed the Conservatory Library with a collection of Violin Concerti complete with score and parts.

MASSEY HALL, TORONTO, TUESDAY, JANUARY 9th, 1945

PROGRAMME NOTES

By Ettore Mazzoleni

PRELUDE AND FUGUE

Mendelssohn-Benjamin

These two pieces are taken from the "Seven Characteristic Pieces" for pianoforte, published in 1828, when Mendelssohn was about eighteen years old. They have been transcribed for orchestra by Arthur Benjamin, the well-known Australian pianist and composer, who is now

living in Vancouver, and whose versatility has already made his name a very prominent one in Canadian musical life.

The Prelude (Andante) is scored for wood-wind only, the Fugue (Allegro vivace con fuoco) for full orchestra.

Profiles . . .

(Elver Omar Wahlberg)

Perhaps you've noticed on our stage
A ball of wavy gold,
And underneath — of no great age,
A nice young man unfold.
He seems to be
Behind a tree
Though really he is not,
It's just the instrument he plays —
'Tis known as a Fagott.
(Bassoon to you — if you would know
The funny things a man can blow).
Now this young man who seems so staid
Is really very jolly,
And all the friends that he has made
Delight to call him "Wally"
Though that is really not his name
But simply a contraction
Of one that he has brought to fame
With this grotesque contraption.



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MASSEY HALL, TORONTO, TUESDAY, JANUARY 9th, 1945

VIOLIN CONCERTO IN B MINOR (No. 3, Op. 61)

Saint-Saens

Saint-Saens was one of those musicians who was fully celebrated during his lifetime as an eminent composer. Romain Rolland said of him that he attained the rare distinction of becoming a classic while he was still alive. Liszt admired him above all other French composers of his day; he was an esteemed friend of Berlioz; and von Bulow wrote of him: "There does not exist a monument of art of any country, school, or epoch that Saint-Saens has not thoroughly studied . . . he has a prodigious memory . . . nothing is unknown to him, and what makes him appear still greater in my eyes is the sincerity of his enthusiasm and his great modesty."

He had a remarkable facility and precocity as composer, pianist, organist, poet, critic and astronomer — but he mistrusted success. "I am very little sensitive to praise or criticism, not because of an exaggerated sense of my value, which would be stupid, but because, producing works to fulfil a function of my nature as an apple tree produces apples, I do not have to concern myself about the opinion others may form of me." Despite the fact that he was a virtuoso composer, he had a strange detachment to the real value of his works. He strove against

all exaggeration of effect, and this restraint, together with his phenomenal facility and his very French qualities of clarity, elegance, and conciseness of expression is characteristic of all his writing.

The B minor Violin Concerto was composed in 1880. It was played for the first time in Paris the following year by Sarasate, to whom it was dedicated. It is in three movements. The first is a determined piece of writing in the bravura style, with an appealing mixture of very French charm and restrained excitement and an almost perfect sense in the solo passages of what is violinistic. The second movement is one of a delicate poetic beauty and charm. A delightful use of wood-wind and solo violin produces many striking effects typical of the subtle and refined scoring of Saint-Saens at its best. The last movement begins with an accompanied instrumental recitative that prepares the way for some very rhythmic, animated, and impassioned writing. An unexpected chorale-like passage, effectively and thoughtfully conceived in colour and rhythm, challenges the technical and energetic first part of the movement. Then follows an artistic and skilful development of all this material, and the work ends with a brilliant flourish.

INTERMISSION

Seventh Subscription Concert

TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SIR ERNEST MacMILLAN, Conductor

MASSEY HALL Tuesday, January 23rd, 8.10 p.m.

Mahler's

Song of the Earth

(First Performance in Toronto)

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LAW**
Contralto

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LADEROUTE**
Tenor

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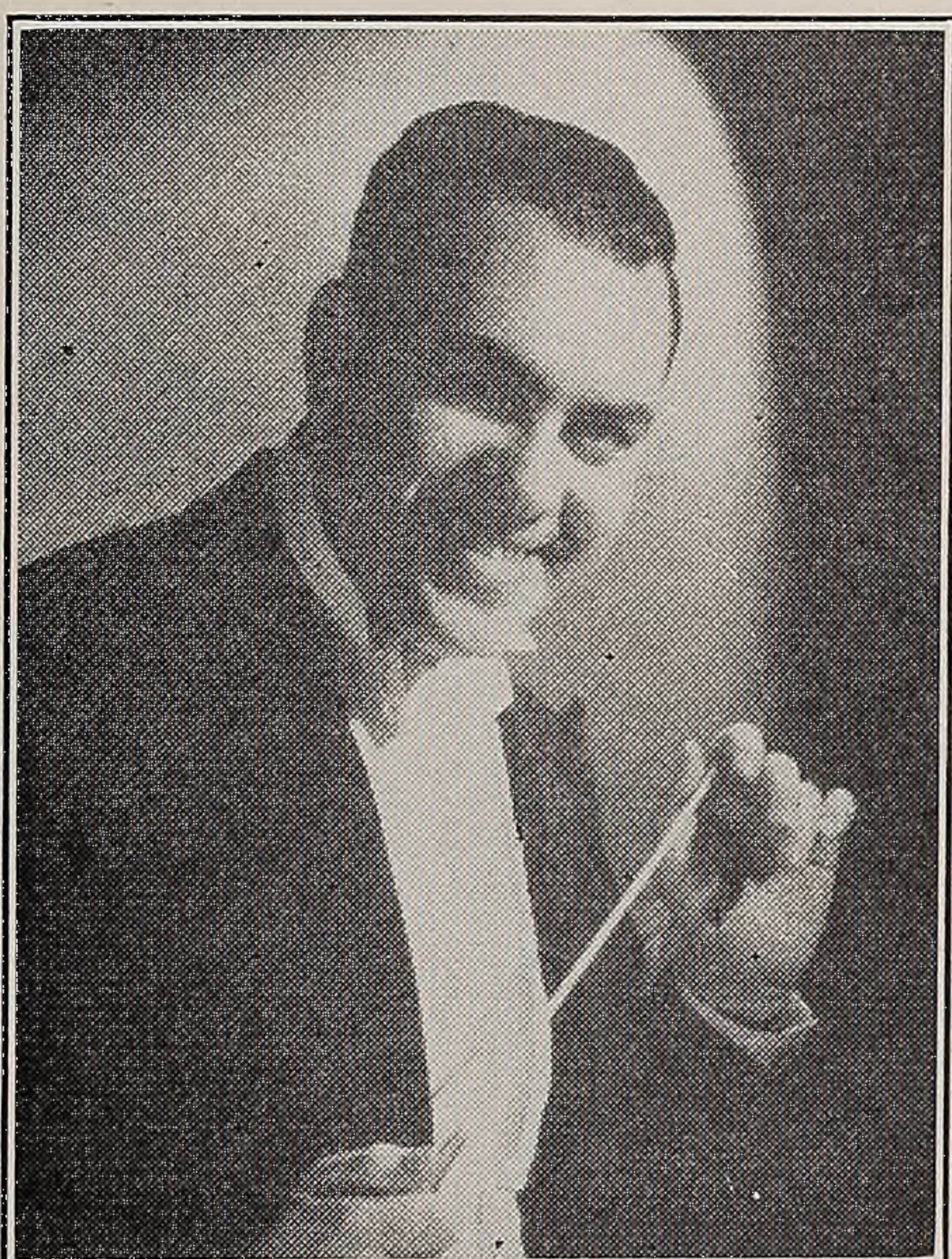
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Did You Know That---?

Last Tuesday's concert was probably a real tribute to the audience, and, for that matter, the audience gave the orchestra a tribute, too. Everybody was disappointed by the absence of Larry Adler, for his versatility has won him a host of followers in Toronto, and the "house was sold out." Mr. Adler missed his concert by the most unfortunate intervention of the big storm in Buffalo, where he was to make his train connections. He did eventually arrive in Toronto, but just three hours after the concert was over! All during the day of the concert it looked as though Larry Adler might still make it if the weather would only break, but Mr. Storm had other ideas.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

As Sir Ernest announced at the concert that night, an effort was made to arrange another date this season for Mr. Adler, but his concert engagements take him to the West Coast at the only time the Orchestra could fit him in this season. The manager of the Orchestra now announces that some other top-flight artist will be secured for one of the concerts later in the year, in order to "make up" for Mr. Adler's absence.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The next series concert on Tuesday, January 23rd, will feature the presentation of the Mahler "Song of the Earth," for its first performance in Toronto. Written in 1908, the great work represents a significant stage in the career of Gustav Mahler, when, three years before the composer's death, he returned to the South Tyrol and his summer home to pour out his musical genius into a song-symphony. In its course, the "Song of the Earth" tells of sorrow, beauty, autumn, youth, of wine and parting — all one aspect of the one idea implied in the title. It was given its first performance after the composer's death, in 1911 by Bruno Walter. Joseph Laderoute and Eileen Law will be the featured soloists for this occasion, when Sir Ernest MacMillan and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra presents Gustav Mahler's greatest work, "Song of the Earth."

SYMPHONY NO. 6, IN F (PASTORAL SYMPHONY)

Beethoven

Much ink has been spilt over this symphony. Because it is generally upheld as the great classical example of programme music in symphony it has had to bear the brunt of generations of narrow-visioned criticism and the responsibility for most of the nineteenth-century development in tone-painting. Mendelssohn asserted that "since Beethoven had taken the step he did in the Pastoral symphony it was impossible to keep clear of it." It has been praised for its anticipation of the tone-poems and dramatic music of the greater composers, and blamed for its encouragement to the crude and puerile realisms of the smaller fry. There are some who look upon music as a purely illustrative art; but there are others who believe so implicitly that music begins where speech ends that all dramatic music is to them inferior, and all programme music a distortion. The relation of music to story or to scene has constituted, as someone aptly said, "the goriest battlefield in aesthetics." Yet composers of all ages, although they may have protested against the principles and dangers of programme music, have been tempted, often self-consciously, to trespass into the forbidden territory.

In the sketch-books of the period which led up to the writing of the Pastoral Symphony—and it is significant to remember that it was composed almost at the same time as the great C Minor, or Fifth Symphony, in which Beethoven sought to express the tremendous forces which underlie man's struggle; in fact, for many years it took precedence over the C Minor in the numbering of the symphonies—there are many reflections on the problem of programme music. "The hearers should be allowed to discover the situations . . . People will not require titles to recognize the general intention to be more a matter of feeling than of painting in sounds . . . Pastoral symphony: no picture, but something in which the emotions are ex-

pressed which are aroused in man by the pleasure of the country . . . All painting in instrumental music, if pushed too far, is a failure." The idea of basing a symphonic work on a series of aspects of country life was not a new one. As a matter of fact, Beethoven followed almost word for word the programme of a pastoral symphony written by the then popular but now obscure composer, Knecht, in 1784. But at the head of the symphony Beethoven set this explanatory statement: "The expression of feelings rather than painting." It was possibly a gesture to meet those "malevolent interpretations" which he avowed would prejudice the success of the work, but it was also the most sensible remark ever made about the symphony, despite those hints at realism which seemed to violate the remark and so caused all the trouble. The worst of these occurs at the end of the slow movement in a passage which represents the cuckoo, the nightingale and the quail—but even the bird-fancier in the music critic could hardly raise any serious objection.

Beethoven had a remarkable sensuous susceptibility to the sights and sounds of Nature. His friends, his letters, his diaries all give testimony to his love for natural beauty. In such beauty his impatient temperament could find peace and freedom from the restraints of social convention and the oppression of his deafness. "My bad hearing does not trouble me here . . . In the country every tree seems to speak to me . . . In the words there is enchantment which expresses all things—sweet peace of the woods. . . . No one loves the country more: woods, trees, rocks seem to understand and respond . . . Do but look upon beautiful Nature and gain strength to face the inevitable calmly . . . I am only happy when in the midst of untouched Nature." Above all, in the contemplation of nature his mighty spirit and strength could relax—and that, after all, is surely the real explanation of the Pastoral Symphony.

SCHERZO CAPRICCIOSO (Op. 66)

Dvorak

Dvorak, like a surprising number of composers good and bad—particularly bad—lacked almost wholly the advantage of a formal instruction in composition. The son of a butcher-innkeeper in a small Bohemian town he was expected to follow his father in the business. But he came of a people to whom making music is as natural as breathing, and he was an intuitive musician of the type of Mozart or Schubert. From singing and fiddle-playing he turned to the organ and piano, until at last he was sent to Prague for regular music study. Then followed years of struggle and privation, until at last his music was recognized. Now he is known to us as one of the most appealing of the leaders of those nationalistic movements which developed during the last century.

His Scherzo Capriccioso was written in the Spring of 1883, when Dvorak was in his forties. It is a characteristic work, from the opening subject for horns, which is as it were the basis of the whole work, to the brilliant ending. A middle episode, a Trio, opens with a theme of expressive character for the English horn. It belongs to those works which were written just before Dvorak made a series of very successful visits to England, a period of inner conflict for the composer reflecting "that struggle of conscience which Dvorak experienced at the time when his German friends pressed him to make a compact with the Teutonic world of music, and would have rejoiced had he written an operatic work to a German text, which would have facilitated his success on the foreign stage. . . . To this pressure Dvorak did not succumb."



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